

RAINBOW COMPANY YOUTH THEATRE

TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE 2013



—Across the Truckee—

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ACROSS THE TRUCKEE

Book by Karen McKenney Lyrics by Kearsten Kuroishi and Tom Dyer

THE COMPANY

Michael Connolly Sean Critchfield
Kearsten Kuroishi Joshua Stackhouse Martha Watson

Rainbow Company is a program of the City of Las Vegas, Office Cultural Affairs.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

This year, more than ever, we've got a winning tour show—literally! That's because four famous characters in Nevada history are depicted within the framework of a game show, replete with commercials of yesteryear products. The audience gets to pick the winner—who they want to win the fortune. Then the actors will explain the fates of the runners-up, and enact the factual destiny of the audience's choice.

The television format is a departure from what the Rainbow Company has presented in prior years, shifting the audience between present-day media conventions to past events that take place between 1856 and 1879. But we've kept much of the style of presentation that our audiences have come to expect. Characters and costume pieces still change fluidly and characters are acted in a frankly theatrical style—believable but a little bigger than life.

The audience will meet four principle historic characters:

Henry Comstock—Originally from Canada, he traveled all over the western United States searching for gold. He arrived in Nevada in 1856 and was one of the original inhabitants of the town of Gold Hill. The Comstock Lode derives its name from him.

Eilley Orrum—She born in Scotland and lived in Nevada beginning in 1859. She gained the nickname of "The Washoe Seeress," due to her hobby of telling fortunes with her "peep stone."

Timothy O'Sullivan—He emigrated from Ireland as a boy. He had the opportunity to learn the art of taking pictures from a pioneer in the field, Matthew Brady. O'Sullivan was noted for his Civil War photographs.

Adolph Sutro—From San Francisco, Sutro became known as the "King of the Comstock." He was interested in mechanics and solving problems.

NEVADA IN THE LAST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

In 1850 the first silver nugget was found in what would be named the Comstock Lode and fortune seekers swarmed into Nevada. Development of this huge body of silver caused Nevada to become a separate territory from Utah in 1861 and a state in 1864. In just three decades, it would yield nearly \$400 million in silver and gold. There were more than 1,000 mining companies formed on the Comstock, but only 29 millionaires were produced!

Virginia City

Virginia City was one of the most famous mining camps in the world, founded in 1859. Since thousands flocked to strike it rich, the population exploded, rising from 200 to approximately 20,000.

Mining Conditions

Discovery of explosives for blasting ore-bearing rock produced deeper shafts and mining became quicker, but more dangerous. The mines could be dusty and stifling or cold, damp and wet; they were always dark, cramped and dangerous, but the potential rewards lured and kept many. Falling rock, flooding, pockets of poisonous or explosive gas, lack of fresh air and fires were hazards as well.

Interesting Facts in Nevada History

1865: Speaker of the House Schuyler Colfax arrives in Virginia City bearing a box containing a headstone and footstone for the neglected grave of Hosea B. Grosch, who with his brother Ethan Allen Grosch, discovered the Comstock Lode.

1867: Silver production at the Comstock mining area is valued at \$16 million.

1868: The first aviation event in Nevada takes place—a balloon ascent from Carson City.

1873: A major innovation in the denim pants sold by Levi Strauss comes from Nevada tailor Jacob Davis, who has the idea of repairing ripped pockets by studding the stress points with tiny copper rivets. Davis sends a letter to the “gents” in San Francisco and Levi’s “501 Double X” overalls become a western fashion sensation.

The “Big Bonanza” strike occurs near Virginia City; the vein of silver and gold is 54 feet wide at a depth of 1,167 feet. Another “Big Bonanza” will yield two mines that produce \$1.5 million in ore per month from 1873-1877. Before they are exhausted in 1897, the mines produce ore worth more than \$135 million.

1877: The first telephones in Nevada are installed in the mines of Virginia City.

IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

1860: The first recorded game of baseball takes place in San Francisco; a primitive form of the typewriter is devised.

1864: “In God We Trust” first appears on U.S. coins.

1865: The first ice machine is invented by Thaddeus Lowe.

1866: Alfred Nobel invents dynamite.

1867: Bicycles begin to be manufactured.

1868: Louisa May Alcott writes “Little Women.”

1869: The first postcards are introduced in Austria.

1870: John D. Rockefeller founds Standard Oil Company.

VOCABULARY

accommodations: anything supplying a need or convenience; food and lodging

assayer/assessment: someone who examines and analyzes ore using chemical methods to determine type and quantity of metals/minerals in it

blowhard: exceptionally boastful and talkative person

blue sludge: high-grade silver

boardinghouse: a house where meals or a room can be had for pay

bonanza: source of great sudden wealth or luck; a rich mass of ore

borax: a white water-soluble powder or crystals used as a cleansing agent

casualty: any person, group or thing harmed or destroyed as a result of an act or event

claim jumper: someone who seizes or illegally re-stakes a claim already filed by another prospector

Consolidated Virginia: the name of one of the extremely high-producing silver mines in Virginia City

contraption: mechanical gadget or device

dabbling: to work at anything in an irregular or superficial manner; to play or splash in with the hands

deed: a legal document showing the sale or transfer of property

dispute: engage in argument or debate

famished: extremely hungry; starving

fund: to provide money to pay interest or a debt

gangue: worthless minerals mixed in with valuable ore

greenhorn: an inexperienced or unsophisticated person; a newcomer unacquainted with local manners and customs

high-grade: ore of superior grade or quality

investment: money put into a business, real estate, or stocks for the purpose of making a profit

ore: rock containing metals or their compounds in enough quantities to be mined

pay dirt: an area where a prospector has found gold and/or silver

publish: to print or reproduce newspapers, books and so forth to distribute or sell to the public

quicksilver: the metallic element mercury, used to separate the silver from the gangue

rising room: elevator

seeress: a fortune teller; a woman who can foresee the future

shaft: a vertical or sloping passageway leading to the surface

share (offer one): the part belonging to one of a number owning property or invested capital

stake (a claim)/claim marker: to claim land by marking boundaries with claim markers such as piles, rocks, stakes, etc.

Territorial Enterprise: one of the outstanding newspapers west of the Mississippi in the late 19th Century, based in Virginia City

tinkering: to busy oneself with a thing without useful results

venture: an investment in a new business, often meaning with some risk
(see definition of investment)

EXPRESSIONS

Dog's age: a long time

Keep it under your hat: don't tell anyone; keep it secret

Don't spare it: use a lot of it

The bottom line: net profit or loss; the last line of a financial statement, used for showing net profit or loss

To be on board: member of a team or organization

Enough slacking: stop evading or dodging duty/work

Don't give any lip: no sassy or rude remarks/responses

All gussied up: to dress in one's best clothes

Enough jawing: enough talking/gossiping/scolding

He has the knack: special skill, talent, aptitude; a clever way of doing something

Take a load off: sit down

Johnny-come-lately: a late arrival or participant; newcomer

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Topics for discussion:

--Discuss fortune telling and foreseeing the future, as Eilley Orrum does with her “peep stone” in the play. Ask if the future can be told. Ask how fortune telling could affect the future actions and decisions of someone if he/she believed what was heard.

--In the play, one of the characters says he can’t read. Ask the class what obstacles they think are encountered by someone who can neither read nor write (e.g., warning signs, waiting for someone to read a letter or story, the possibility of being cheated, limitations of participating in everyday life—such as obtaining a driver’s license.)

Drama:

Still Photos

Introduce or review the concept of body language—that one’s posture and movements speak as loud (or louder) than words. Drawing upon the photographer, Timothy O’Sullivan, in the play, tell the class that they will be creating their own still photos with you, focusing on body language to convey feelings, location, circumstances, etc. Ask for a volunteer to step up and strike a frozen pose of someone who has just discovered silver. Ask for a second volunteer who is his partner and is staking a claim. Emphasize that the volunteers cannot speak or move from the pose. Stress that the class cannot make remarks or be disrespectful about the volunteers. Ask for a third volunteer to go behind a “rock,” waiting to jump the claim when the prospectors leave. Aside from facial expression, ask the class how they know that the prospectors are happy and what is being done. Discuss the pose of the claim jumper and why they think this person is sneaky.

Repeat the exercise using Eilley Orrum peering into her “peep stone” and seeing something surprising. Add other volunteers looking over her shoulder; one is happy, one is sad, one is angry. Remind the participants that the body language is the important thing—facial expressions are the least important in the photo.

Other suggestions for photos: miners hitting a steam pocket; someone drawing on the tablecloth of a fine restaurant; cheaters at a card game; important historic Nevada events that the students suggest.

Commercials

Review and discuss the five commercials in the play and the products that were sold. Divide the class into groups of four and explain that they will be doing a television commercial of a product you will be assigning. Tell the class that everyone must be involved as actors on air—no camera operators, directors, etc. It is all right, however, for someone to be an inanimate object (an inanimate character) if the commercial calls for it. All actors need to be seen and heard clearly and the commercial cannot be longer than one minute (30 seconds is better)!

You might wish to outline the following simplified pattern that many commercials follow:

--The attention getter

--The problem

--The solution

--The closing

Hand out a card to each group with one of the following products written on it:

Mouse trap

Bubble gum

Boomerang

Feather duster

Flea powder

Bathtub

Invisible ink

Spoon

Allow students time to discuss and rehearse their commercials and then share their creations with the rest of the class.

Scenes

Using the same items listed above, have each group create a scene about how the item was invented. It does not need to be accurate; in fact, the more imaginative--the better! Tell the class that each scene must have a clear beginning, middle and end. Again, all students must be in the scene and it should not be any longer than one minute. Using only one location is also a good idea.

Lemonade Pantomime

Define the term pantomime for the class: expressing where you are, how you are feeling, and what you are doing using actions, but no words. Explain that they will be using pantomime to convey the kinds of trades (mining, blacksmithing, mercantile, etc.) and chores (laundry, bread making, chopping wood, knitting, drawing water) that would have been done in Nevada in the last half of the 19th century. Introduce the pantomime game "New York," otherwise known as "Lemonade." The players divide into two equal teams and stand on parallel goals twenty or more feet apart. The first team decides secretly on the trade or chore to be pantomimed and then advances toward the other team while the following dialogue takes place:

First team: Here we come.

Second team: Where from?

First team: New York (substitute a two-syllable place like Gold Hill, Reno, or The West!)

Second team: What's your trade?

First team: Lemonade.

Second team: Give us some.

The first team's players come as near to the second as they dare and act out their trade/chore, each in his/her own way. The second team tries to identify what is being pantomimed; when one player identifies the trade correctly, the first team squats or sits cross-legged before a second team member can tag them. All who are tagged have been captured and join the taggers' side. The second team chooses a trade and the dialogue is repeated, followed by the pantomiming, as before. Both sides have the same number of turns, and the one having the largest number of players at the end wins.

IN OTHER WORDS....

Many colorful terms and expressions evolved throughout the settling of the West and are still used today. See if you can match the expressions used in the play with the correct definitions.

Place the letter of the correct definition in the space on the left.

Expressions

Definitions

_____ dog's age

a. no sassy or rude arguments or remarks

_____ keep it under your hat

b. a late arrival or newcomer

_____ don't spare it

c. to dress up in your best

_____ bottom line

d. don't tell anyone

_____ to be on board

e. sit down

_____ no slacking

f. stop talking

_____ don't give any lip

g. use a lot of it

_____ gussied up

h. special skill or talent

_____ enough jawing

i. a long time

_____ he has the knack

j. member of a team or organization

_____ take a load off

k. net or final profit

_____ Johnny-come-lately

l. stop evading or dodging work or duty

TEACHER'S ANSWER KEY

Expressions

__i__ dog's age

__d__ keep it under your hat

__g__ don't spare it

__k__ bottom line

__j__ to be on board

__l__ no slacking

__a__ don't give any lip

__c__ gussied up

__f__ enough jawing

__h__ he has the knack

__e__ take a load off

__b__ Johnny-come-lately

Definitions

a. no sassy or rude arguments or remarks

b. a late arrival or newcomer

c. to dress up in your best

d. don't tell anyone

e. sit down

f. stop talking

g. use a lot of it

h. special skill or talent

i. a long time

j. member of a team or organization

k. net or final profit

l. stop evading or dodging work or duty

WORD DISCOVERY

m	a	q	b	l	e	s	k	g	p	u	n	e	r	t
i	a	z	f	m	t	z	r	q	n	e	s	h	e	i
a	z	l	n	a	y	e	x	z	o	u	m	t	v	n
e	c	m	k	a	e	a	t	g	o	c	s	j	l	k
u	f	e	a	n	n	s	k	h	e	o	u	b	i	e
d	q	p	h	n	s	o	g	r	w	n	z	l	s	r
t	c	o	s	e	y	n	b	f	z	t	o	c	k	i
z	r	m	r	g	i	d	y	u	b	r	s	d	c	n
n	a	e	l	d	e	m	f	t	f	a	l	y	i	g
d	e	u	r	e	e	r	o	t	a	p	x	v	u	d
s	u	a	d	e	p	e	r	q	x	t	e	f	q	w
z	o	y	c	u	u	f	p	p	n	i	w	h	u	k
b	v	t	q	s	y	v	m	y	b	o	c	w	m	t
j	j	g	t	q	c	u	b	e	g	n	l	e	z	u
z	i	m	s	h	l	f	h	k	z	f	p	t	d	f

Here are the words that you can discover in the above puzzle:

BOARDINGHOUSE

BONANZA

CONTRAPTION

DEED

GREENHORN

ORE

QUICKSILVER

SEERESS

STAKE

TINKERING

Draw a circle around the letters, but remember: the words can be up, down, diagonal or back-to-front!

TEACHER'S ANSWER KEY

m	A	q	b	l	e	S	k	G	p	u	n	E	R	T
i	a	Z	f	m	T	z	R	q	n	e	S	h	E	I
a	z	l	N	A	y	E	x	z	o	U	m	t	V	N
e	c	m	K	A	E	a	t	g	O	C	s	j	L	K
u	f	E	a	N	N	s	k	H	e	O	u	b	I	E
d	q	p	H	n	S	O	G	r	w	N	z	l	S	R
t	c	O	s	E	y	N	B	f	z	T	o	c	K	I
z	R	m	R	g	I	D	y	u	b	R	s	d	C	N
N	a	E	l	D	E	m	f	t	f	A	l	y	I	G
d	E	u	R	E	E	R	O	t	a	P	x	v	U	d
S	u	A	D	e	p	e	r	q	x	T	e	f	Q	w
z	O	y	c	u	u	f	p	p	n	I	w	h	u	k
B	v	t	q	s	y	v	m	y	b	O	c	w	m	t
j	j	g	t	q	c	u	b	e	g	N	l	e	z	u
z	i	m	s	h	l	f	h	k	z	f	p	t	d	f

CREATIVE LYRICS

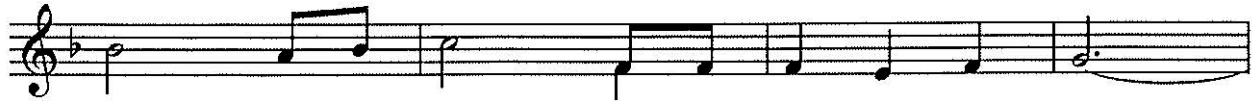
Two traditional American tunes and their familiar lyrics are included on the following pages. These songs, like many others, were often adapted by settlers who supplied different lyrics reflecting their specific region and livelihood. Students may wish to do the same!

HOME ON THE RANGE

Traditional American song



1. Oh, give me a home where the buf - fa - lo
of - ten at night, when the hea - vens are
air is so pure, the ze - phyr's so
love those wild flow'rs in this dear land of



roam, and the deer and the an - te - lope play.
bright with the light from the glit - ter - ing stars.
free, the breeze so bal - my and light.
ours, the cur - -lew, -I love -to hear - scream.



Where sel - dom is heard a dis - cour - ag - ing
Have I stood there a - mazed, and asked as I
That I would not ex - change my home on the
-And I love the white rocks and the an - te - lope



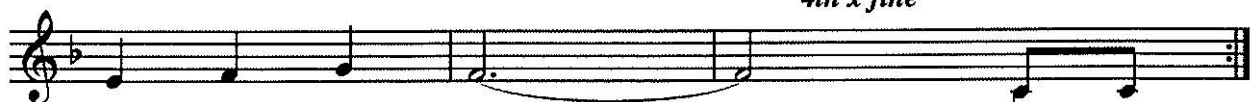
word, and the skies are not clou - dy all day.
gazed, if their glor - y ex - ceeds that of ours.
range for all of the ci - ties so bright.
flocks that graze on the moun - tain tops green.



Home, home on the range. Where the deer and the an-te-lope



play. Where sel-dom is heard a dis-cour-ag-ing word, and the skies are not



clou - dy all day.

4th x fine

2. How
3. Where the
4. Oh, I

MY DARLING CLEMENTINE

*Traditional American song though it might have
been written by Percy Montrose around 1883*



In a ca - vern, in a can - yon Ex - ca - va - ting for a mine Lived a
Oh, my dar - ling, oh, my dar - ling Oh, my dar - ling Cle - men - tine You are



mi - ner for - ty - ni - ner And his daugh - ter, Cle - men - tine.
lost and gone for - e - ver Dread - ful sor - ry, Cle - men - tine.

In a cavern, in a canyon
Excavating for a mine
Lived a miner forty-niner
And his daughter, Clementine.

In a churchyard near the canyon
Where the myrtle doth entwine
There grow roses and the posies
Fertilized by Clementine.

Light she was and like a fairy
And her shoes were number nine
Herring boxes without topses
Sandals were for Clementine.

Then the miner, forty-niner
Soon began to peak and pine
Thought he oughter join his daughter
Now he's with his Clementine.

Drove she ducklings to the water
Every morning just at nine
Hit her foot against a splinter
Fell into the foaming brine.

In my dreams she still doth haunt me
Robed in garments soaked in brine
Though in life I used to hug her
Now she's dead, I'll draw the line.

Ruby lips above the water
Blowing bubbles soft and fine
But, alas, I was no swimmer,
So I lost my Clementine.

How I missed her, how I missed her
How I missed my Clementine
Till I kissed her little sister
And forgot my Clementine.

FROM THE RAINBOW COMPANY

Theatre and Drama Opportunities For Your Students

Don't miss our next production!

Rapunzel! Rapunzel! A Very Hairy Fairy Tale

The classic fairy tale of Rapunzel comes to life in this exciting new musical event for the whole family. Enjoy the new twist on the old tale—from the writing team that created

“How I Became a Pirate.”

Charleston Heights Arts Center

800 S. Brush Street, Las Vegas 89107

April 26, 27, May 3, 4 at 7 p.m.

April 28, May 4, 5 at 2 p.m.

Tickets: \$7 for adults; \$5 for teens/seniors/military; \$3 for children age 12 and under.

Free backstage tours to groups of 10 or more; advance booking required.

Call 229-6383/6553 for tickets; or visit www.artslasvegas.org.

Spring Break Drama Workshop for Grades 2-6

March 25-29, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Children learn different aspects of theatre—theatre games, improvisation, acting exercises, rehearsal skills and more. On Saturday morning, March 30, family and friends are invited to a theatrical presentation on the main stage of Charleston Heights Arts Center.

Rainbow Company Drama Classes

New class sessions start at the beginning of April for ages 4-17.

**For class and workshop registration, visit www.artslasvegas.org
or call 229-6383/6553.**

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